

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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UNCLAS ACCRA 8004

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON

SUBJ: OPENING OF UANA TECHNICAL AND EXECUTIVE MEETING IN ACCRA

1. JOINT MEETING OF TECHNICAL AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF UNION OF AFRICAN NEWS AGENCIES (UANA) OPENED NOVEMBER 1 IN ACCRA AMID SOLEMN REPETITIONS OF OFT-DECLARED NEED FOR INDIGENOUS AFRICAN NEWS AGENCY TO COUNTERBALANCE "DISTORTED" REPORTING BY NON-AFRICAN SERVICES. DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF OPENING STATEMENTS, HOWEVER, WAS THEIR MODERATE TONE. VERY LITTLE RHETORIC WAS DEVOTED TO SPECIFIC CONDEMNATION OF THE "DISTORTIONS" REFERRED TO AND NOTHING WAS HEARD OF THE UNESCO THEME OF STATE CONTROL.

2. PRINCIPAL OPENING SPEAKER WAS GHANA'S COMMISSIONER FOR INFORMATION, BRIG. R.E.A. KOTEL. DECLARING THAT GAP IN NEWS AND INFORMATION BETWEEN DEVELOPING AND ADVANCED WORLD WAS WIDENING, HE DENOUNCED "IMPROPER EMPHASIS" IN NEWS OF DEVELOPING WORLD BY FOREIGN NEWS SERVICES "HOWEVER WELL-MEANING". HE EQUATED DETERMINATION TO CEASE DEPENDENCE ON OUTSIDE AGENCIES TO GHANA'S GENERAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EMPHASIS ON "SELF-RELIANCE." FOR GHANA'S PART, HE ANNOUNCED GHANA NEWS AGENCY (GNA) WAS RESPONDING TO REQUESTS FROM

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OTHER UNNAMED AFRICAN NATIONS TO HELP DEVELOP

NATIONAL NEWS SERVICES AND PLANNED TO EXTEND SERVICE TO INCLUDE RADIOPHOTO SERVICE. IN CONNECTION WITH DISCUSSION OF NEED TO REDUCE COST OF TELEX SERVICE BETWEEN AFRICAN CAPITALS HE ANNOUNCED CONSTRUCTION OF NEW GNA TRANSMISSION AND RECEPTION FACILITY OUTSIDE ACCRA.

3. IN SIMILAR TONE, IVOIRIAN UANA PRESIDENT ISSIAKA TAO STRESSED THAT IN PLANNING ALL-AFRICAN NEWS AGENCY, AFRICANS WERE NOT SEEKING TO HANDLE NEWS DIFFERENTLY FROM FOREIGNERS, BUT TO DO IT THEMSELVES. POINT WAS TO CEASE DEPENDENCE ON OTHERS AND DEMONSTRATE AFRICANS' COMPETENCE TO MEET THEIR OWN INFORMATION NEEDS.
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